

## Preface

*'Nature provides us with the nuts,  
We have to crack them.'*

**Goethe.**

**T**he mother earth is a rich reservoir of natural resources. All through evolution, nature has provided us with all our needs. Through out the evolutionary process man was afflicted by diseases. As civilizations developed so did the treatment of man's afflictions. Natural plant/herbal remedies formed the corner stone of such treatments. Ancient people realised the medicinal properties of these plants. They named them and gave the references in the Vedas. Nowadays people are running after the ready made chemical drugs for a timely relief without caring the harmful side effects. Now man has no time to go in search of leaves and roots of plants of medicinal importance even though they are harmless. He even neglects the medicinal plants around him. All these factors persuaded us for the following study.

Few plants which are commonly used in ayurvedic preparations were screened for their antiatherogenic and anticancerous property. Plants selected are *Centella asiatica*, *Boerhaavia diffusa* and *Tinospora cordifolia*. The active principles were also separated and purified. The following aspects are discussed in this thesis under five sections.

- A. General Introduction
- B. Phytotherapy- A Review
- C. Anticancerous Property of Medicinal Plants
- D. Antiatherogenic Property of Medicinal Plants
- E. Structural characterisation of an active principle isolated from *Centella asiatica*